Book Review

CRANIOFACIAL ABNORMALITIES AND CLEFTS OF THE LIP, ALVEOLUS AND PALATE. G. Pfeifer, Editor. Thieme Medical Publishers, Inc., New York, 1991, 409 pp.

This large (409 pages, double columns) and expensive book (550 Deutschemarks) is an outgrowth of the Fourth Hamburg International Symposium on Craniofacial Abnormalities and Clefts of the Lip, Alveolus, and Palate. Most articles are 2–4 pages long, and many are at the shorter end of this range. However, there are some exceptions. In all, there are over 150 separate articles.

The volume is divided into eight parts: 1) Head and Neck; 2) Morphology, Growth, Genetics, Teratology; 3) Clefts of Lip, Alveolus, and Palate; 4) Unilateral Clefts, Long-Term Results of Treatment; 5) Unilateral Osteoplasty; 6) Bilateral Clefts, Long-Term Results of Treatment; 7) Bilateral Osteoplasty; and 8) Cleft Palate, Speech, and Hearing—Long-Term Results of Treatment. Part 1, which deals with craniofacial anomalies, is particularly weak. Although authored by many distinguished surgeons, new data are very sparse. Part 2, a basic science section, fares better. Parts 3–8 deal with orofacial clefting and present much hard data in tabular form.

Of interest to medical geneticists is the classification of craniofacial anomalies presented by Pfeifer (pp. 27–40). Group 1 ("generalized malformations") includes all those "that developed prior to organogenesis, such as those in ectodermal dysplasias, chromosomal anomalies, metabolic disorders, and following teratogenic noxae, but also severe regional developmental disorders, like Siamese twins, the teratologic order of double head—Janus head—macro- and microcephaly-anencephaly, and extensive forms of spina bifida (myelocele)." Group 2 ("prosencephalic orders") includes cyclopia and frontonasal "dysplasia," among others. Group 3 ("diacephalic orders") includes "tryphyllocephally" (cloverleaf skull) and unilateral cryptophthalmia with plagiocephaly, among others. Group 4 ("rhomboencephalic orders") includes mandibulofacial dysostosis and hemifacial microsomia, among others.

It is unnecessary for me to comment specifically on this classification; res ipsa loquitur. Classifications such as this one, and another proposed by van der Meulen et al. [1983] and critiqued elsewhere [Cohen, 1989; Gorlin and Cohen, 1993], do, however, give us an indication of the teaching we should anticipate providing for some of our surgical colleagues when requested to do so.

Every subject covered in this volume has much more extensive treatment in various books and in articles in the surgical, medical, anatomic, embryologic, and genetic literature. The impression gained is that the material in this volume should have appeared simply as a group of abstracts in a supplementary or perhaps regular issue of a surgical journal. The only reason for purchasing a copy, other than for inclusion in libraries, would be the need to own a complete collection of every book dealing with craniofacial anomalies and clefts.

REFERENCES

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Gorlin RJ, Cohen MM Jr (1993): Median facial dysplasia in unilateral and bilateral cleft lip and palate: A subgroup of median cerebrofacial malformations: Discussion. Plast Reconstr Surg 91: 1006–1007.

Van der Meulen JC, Mazzola R, Vermeij-Keers C, Stricker M, Raphael B (1983): A morphogenetic classification of craniofacial malformations. Plast Reconstr Surg 71:560–572.

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